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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to suggest the utility of an alternate level of data collection for desegregation research. There appears to exist an important disparity between the results generated by a large number of empirical studies and their application to segregation remedy at the classroom, school, and district level. This paper's bias is that the "numerical indicators" and correlates of desegregation which have been used in national level studies have had minimal impact in moving schools from the segregated to desegregated to the integrated stages. The emphasis then of this data collection model is focused on those school and district level factors which continue to render schools for all practical purposes segregated. These school and district level factors are classified as follows: Organizational Patterns (Fiscal Considerations, Funding Patterns, Allocation of Educational Resources; Policy Considerations; Adjustment Procedure Mentality, Acquiescent Mentality), Administrative Patterns (Staffing Patterns, System-Individual Metaperspective, Information Access, and Instructional Patterns (In-School Segregation, Counseling, Special Education, Co-Curricular Activities). This paper indicates that these factors are critical to the desegregation process. Although a school has been designated legally desegregated, occurrences within it can render it for all practical purposes virtually racially segregated. Thus, a school which is desegregated or desegregating, can through manipulations of the above factors, become reseggregated.
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LEVEL AND REMEDY IN SCHOOL DESEGREGATION RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to suggest the utility of an alternate level of data collection for desegregation research. There appears to exist an important disparity between the results generated by a large number of empirical studies and their application to segregation remedy at the classroom, school, and district level. Our bias is that the "numerical indicators" and correlates of desegregation which have been used in national level studies have had minimal impact in moving schools from the segregated to desegregated to the integrated stages. The emphasis then of our data collection model is focused on those school and district level factors which continue to render schools for all practical purposes segregated. These school and district level factors are classified as organizational, administrative, and instructional.

Level and Remedy in School Desegregation Research

Introduction

It is the purpose of this paper to suggest the utility of an alternate level of data collection for desegregation research. There appears to exist an important disparity between the results generated by a large number of empirical studies and their application to segregation remedy at the classroom, school, and district level (Riffel, et al., 1976). It is our bias that the "numerical indicators" and correlates of desegregation which have been used in national level studies have had minimal impact in moving schools from the segregated to desegregated to the integrated stages.

Added impetus for the desegregation of our public schools came in 1966 when James Coleman published Equality of Educational Opportunity. In that report Coleman stated that desegregation should be expected to have a positive effect on Black achievement and he concluded that "the achievement of minority pupils depends more on the schools they attend than does the achievement of majority pupils" (p. 22). Willie (1976, p. 318) reported that:

. . . The Coleman Report (1966) encompassed other findings: (1) "it appears that differences between schools account for only a small fraction of differences in pupil achievement," (2) "minority pupils . . . have far less conviction than whites that they can affect their own environments and futures," (3) "when (minority students have a belief that they can affect their own environments and futures), . . . their achievement is higher than that of whites who lack that conviction," and (4) "those Blacks in schools with a higher proportion of whites have a greater sense of control."

Equality of Educational Opportunity, however, had an explosive impact on desegregation research. The enormity of the project can be shown by looking at the question of how segregation affects the level of achievement of students. Reanalysis of Coleman's data led Mayeske (1969) along with Mosteller and Moynihan (1972) to concur with Coleman that once school socio-economic composition had been taken into account such factors as teacher qualifications, school facilities, and expenditures contributed little in explaining differences in school level achievement. Jencks (1972) went further and concluded that the school environment made little difference in achievement or social status. Other investigators, however, concluded that several factors play a role in the nature and level of academic achievement (Clement, Eisenhart, & Wood, 1976). In another variation, academic norms and expectations which characterize the student body have also been used to explain the variance in academic achievement (McDill, Rigsby, & Meyers, 1973). Brookover et al., (1976) in their study of elementary school climate, composition, and socio-economic status in relation to academic achievement concluded:

It is clear that school composition does not necessarily determine school climate and, therefore, changes in climate do not guarantee changes in school level achievement (p. 35).

In applying these findings to the school desegregation issue they state:

It seems safe to conclude that neither racial nor socio-economic desegregation of schools automatically produces higher school achievement. If the unfavorable social-psychological climate which

typically characterizes segregated black and lower SES schools continues to prevail for the poor or minority students in the desegregated schools, desegregation is not likely to materially affect the achievement of the students (p. 35).

Using the Metropolitan Achievement Test, Bundren (1974) investigated the achievement pattern of Black students prior to and after two years of desegregation in the Clark County School District of Las Vegas, Nevada (under their current desegregation plan). He stated that some accomplishments were evident in improving the achievement patterns of Blacks; however, a wide gap still existed between the achievement of Black and white students. Since the Brown decision, however, the level of student achievement in desegregated schools has not been the only issue of concern (Egerton, 1976): growing segregation by race, socio-economic segregation, exclusion of students, student behavior, in-school segregation, bussing, resistance to desegregation, erosion of support for desegregation, legal complexities, the limits of schools.

Farley (1976) stated that generally investigators of school segregation during the last two decades seemed to concur regarding the following points:

- 1) For more than a decade after the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka ruling, there was little actual desegregation of schools.
- 2) Beginning in the 1960's new pressures affected those districts, particularly southern districts, which had maintained segregated schools.
- 3) There has been much more desegregation of schools after 1968 than previously.

- 4) Frequently busing has been used to achieve integration (desegregation).
- 5) Federal courts continue to insist upon the within-district desegregation of schools.
- 6) The residential distribution of Blacks and whites impedes school desegregation.

The validity of the studies conducted to investigate the effects of desegregation on children have hinged on the ability of researchers to accurately measure whether desegregation exists in the schools they are studying--thus underscoring the need in the context of the studies outlined for an appropriate measure of desegregation to be used as a criterion. We believe that no such adequate statistical measure currently exists.

The data models for these studies have been virtually identical so that by now we are quite used to looking at beta weights, R^2 changes and suppressor relationships. The various arguments over what to partial, when, and so on, however, probably has taken its toll on those who are primarily interested in the more substantive issues involved in those data.

We argue in this paper that the many national policy level studies which have been conducted have minimal impact on classroom, school or district level desegregation efforts and shall outline what we consider to be an effective data collection model (Riffel, et al., 1976). We believe this model will provide information which will assist district and school level personnel to facilitate the desegregation process.

Background

Immediately after the Brown decision, upon compliance with court and legislative mandates, a district was termed desegregated. Usually such

compliance involved the shuffling of students, teachers, and staff in order to transform schools to the racial balance of the district or some pre-determined level. The assumption underlying such tactics was that representative racial balance would be an important first step in the abolishment of social practices which restrict minority children's access to equal educational opportunities. We are about to seriously suggest, however, that judicial intent was and is being circumvented by the institutionalization of organizational, administrative, and instructional practices which for all practical purposes keep schools segregated. The emphasis then of our data collection model is focused on those school and district level factors which continue to render schools for all practical purposes segregated. They may be outlined as follows:

- 1) Organizational Patterns
 - A) Fiscal Considerations
 1. Funding Patterns
 2. Allocation of Educational Resources
 - B) Policy Considerations
 1. Adjustment Procedure Mentality
 2. Acquiescent Mentality
- 2) Administrative Patterns
 - A) Staffing Patterns
 - B) System-Individual Metaperspective
 - C) Information Access
- 3) Instructional Patterns
 - A) In-School Segregation and Resegregation
 - B) Counseling

C) Special Education

D) Co-Curricular Activities

We believe that these factors are critical to the desegregation process. Let us explain why. Although a school has been designated legally desegregated, occurrences within it can render it for all practical purposes virtually racially segregated. So we have a school which is desegregated or desegregating and, through manipulation of the factors we mentioned, becomes resegregated. Let us excerpt from a previous paper (Smith, Stoll, and Dziuban, 1976) in which we have outlined these factors in more detail:

Resegregation: An Exposition

Organizational Considerations

Funding Patterns. The inequitable distribution of funds to poor districts is well documented (Clement, Eisenhart, & Wood, 1976). Districts with the lowest achievement levels and the greatest proportion of culturally disadvantaged pupils have been found to receive the least local revenue. Present state aid formulae and supplementary federal funds do not offset the differential.

Municipalities overburdened with social needs (primarily poor, Black, urban centers) are particularly victimized by inequitable funding patterns. A New York Chancellor of education noted that in addition to the already high cost of providing other services, educational requirements necessitate that municipal overburden be recognized as a factor in school equalization formulae. The richest districts in New York State have four times the property wealth of the poorest districts. Present equalization formulae in New York disregard:

- a. municipal overburden
- b. greater educational needs in urban areas
- c. reduced FTE allocations due to higher degree of absenteeism in urban schools.

A test case is pending in the New York courts.

In spite of the preposterous research of those who purport to find no relationship between money spent and educational achievement, we submit

that fiscal discrimination often accelerates resegregation along class and racial lines. In addition, we propose that the labelling of a school which receives federal funds as a "target" or "special" center designates that school as inappropriate for privileged youngsters--additionally facilitating resegregation.

Allocation of Educational Resources. The United States Commission on Civil Rights reported that 75% of all Black elementary school pupils attend schools which are 90% to 100% Black. Over two million of these youngsters attend schools in one of the twenty largest city school districts. The Kerner Commission found that inner city schools are older than suburban schools, more crowded, lack library books and science labs, contain inferior gymnasiums, auditoriums, athletic fields and cafeterias (Education Daily, 1977).

Frequently we have observed not only all these deficiencies in predominantly Black schools, but in addition a striking lack of appropriate multi-ethnic materials and visual displays. We suggest that this strategic absence of facilities, equipment and instructional supplies insures that Black youngsters will be excluded from an "academic" education and, therefore will be relegated to a restricted, resegregated future.

Policy Discrimination

Adjustment Procedure Mentality. Mandated desegregation required reorganization of existent dual systems. Generally, many reorganization policies were designed to insure that movement without change would take place. Minority schools were either phased out, converted into non-instructional facilities, or subordinated within the system. One Florida county superintendent proudly announced in 1966 that "we have closed all schools that were known to be Negro schools and placed the pupils in others."

We have termed subordination within the system "adjustment procedure mentality." The Pratt Decision, for example, mandated that the Department of

Health, Education and Welfare enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in all higher education institutions in ten southern and border states (e.g., these institutions were directed to stop discriminating on the basis of race). In the state of Florida, there was only one traditionally Black, public, higher education institution: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU). Prior to 1973, FAMU made relatively independent policy decisions concerning curriculum, staffing, admissions, etc. The question confronting majority administrators in 1973 was "what shall we do about FAMU?" --phase the school out, combine the institution with Florida State University (FSU, a predominantly white institution), or redefine it ~~as~~ a specialized center? Presently, the Board of Regents and the presidents of all Florida State universities make policy decisions concerning Florida A & M. FAMU can now be identified as a minority institution within, rather than separate from, the majority institution.

Acquiescent Mentality. We propose that a substantial majority of school boards and school administrators harbor a segregationist mentality. Their preference for segregation is most observable when they are confronted by the legal and moral forces for and against desegregation. For example, administrators repeatedly overcrowd or extend the school day at predominantly white schools to accommodate white students whose parents refuse to let them attend predominantly Black schools. Frequently, new school sites are selected which insure uniracial student compositions and often school boundaries are drawn to placate white pressure groups. Finally, resegregation which occurs as a result of population movement is generally accepted as a legitimate by-product of court order desegregation ("white flight") and ignored.

The danger inherent in an acquiescent stance, we feel, is a serious threat to legal desegregation. Probably this is most clearly typified by President Ford's inclination to request a judicial review of the Boston desegregation plan. The intense community pressure is climaxed by Louise Day Hicks' comment that "we are teetering on a massacre. Unless forced bussing is stopped in the city of Boston, it's going to be a long summer."

Such a statement most certainly helped direct the White House's attention to this case. High level acquiescence to white pressure groups increases polarization and may, eventually, erode legal decisions. Acquiescence on the local level produces biased, non-objective decisions and maintains segregated systems.

Administrative Considerations

Staffing Patterns. Desegregation displaced many Black staff members. One thousand Black teachers and fifty-seven administrators were dropped from the Florida County employment rolls between 1968 and 1970, during which time there was a statewide increase of 7,500 teachers. The Black principal was likely to be shifted to a job which required less experience, lower certification requirements and less responsibility than a principalship. He or she was likely to remain in this inferior position until retirement.

We suggest that discriminatory staffing patterns are frequently observable in today's legally desegregated schools. Generally, the administrative staff and school board do not reflect the racial composition of the school population. Similar trends are evident for support personnel and teachers. Teaching staff assignments differ in resegregating school districts: (a) a disproportionate number of first year teachers are assigned to predominantly poor, Black,

urban schools, and (b) Black administrators are recruited for positions such as "assistant to the superintendent" and generally, strategically assigned to leadership positions which restrict their sphere of influence to the Black student population.

System-Individual Metaperspective. Contingency hiring is often forced upon Black individuals in desegregating systems. The process takes several forms, two of which are: the assignment of Black administrators from the dual system to powerless positions in the desegregated system (e.g., director of textbooks; assistant to the superintendent in charge of building and grounds; etc.); and the hiring of Black professionals solely to "control" Black students and placate the Black community. The Florida Education Association reported that although some Blacks have been promoted to "high visibility positions" all old, established roles of real and powerful leadership are virtually closed to them.

Frequently, Black professionals hired on a contingency basis have the appropriate credentials for acceptance into the system. Often these credentials are ignored for the purposes of the "real" system and we suggest that eventually, as a result of organizational manipulation, many of these professionals become dysfunctional.

We assume here that the system is oriented toward maintenance of the status quo. The most vocal Black professional often learns to exhibit survival behavior after neutralization by the rewards and punishments of the system. Other Blacks, perceiving themselves as inferior by indoctrination, display conflictual behavior. We note, however, that some Black individuals or groups operationalize the anglo ethnic. It is further assumed that the

minority groups must be accurate in their metaperspective (i.e., their perceptions of how they are viewed in the system) if they are to advance within it.

Information Access. In a resegregating school system, Blacks are systematically denied strategic information. Often Black administrators are not invited to attend "important" meetings, do not receive certain memos, and are denied relevant, written documents. These institutional practices keep Black administrators "information poor" and powerless. The same practices deny Black parents, agencies, and organizations access to information regarding the system. A group of Black parents and teachers, for example, recently requested outside technical assistance from the Florida School Desegregation Consulting Center (FSDCC). They were concerned about the poor progress of Black students in reading in this majority-white, small, wealthy school district. They were particularly distressed about the lack of program alternatives for their youngsters, believing that ITA (Initial Teaching Alphabet--a sound/symbol approach to initial reading instruction) was the sole reading program available. Only after intervention by an outside agency, did county office staff personnel inform the Black parents and professionals that other reading programs had been available for some time by parental request.

Instructional Patterns

In-School Segregation and/or Resegregation. Misuse of standardized tests, assignment of students to ability groups inappropriately, inconsistently and racially disproportionate enforcement of disciplinary policies, and maintenance of racially identifiable school areas are four extra-legal practices often employed to promote in-school resegregation.

The use and abuse of standardized achievement and intelligence tests has been widely debated. Many researchers suggest these tests, because of the biased content and inappropriate or misrepresented norms, systematically discriminate against minority students. Other researchers contend that these tests measure skills necessary for success in the prevailing culture and accurately indicate the future performance of Black youngsters. We feel that the theoretical rationale adopted to explain why minority students often perform poorly on standardized tests is not as important as the undebatable consequences of this phenomenon.

Based on standardized test results, a disproportionately large number of minority students are classified as unintelligent and a subnormally small number are labeled as gifted. These same test results are generally used to assign students to ability groups. Findley and Byron (1970) reported that seventy-seven per cent of the schools they surveyed do some ability grouping and that social class and racial differences were exaggerated by tracking. Moreover, they found in a comprehensive survey of the literature that ability grouping reduces self-concept, academic achievement and intellectual stimulation for the low achieving groups. Do standardized tests accurately predict later performance or are they inappropriate for minority youngsters? We do not believe this question can be answered, as long as Black youngsters are labeled as slow learners, racially isolated within school buildings, and denied access to a stimulating and appropriate curriculum.

We view tracking as one tool that can be used by prejudiced counselors and administrators to maintain segregated classrooms. Another tool which may be used is suspension. The data compiled by the Children's Defense

Fund suggested that discrimination, not misbehavior, accounts for the disproportionate suspension rate of Black students. They report that Black children were suspended at twice the rate of any other ethnic group. At the secondary school level they found that Black students were suspended three times as often as whites. We believe that analysis of a school's discipline practices is an easily quantifiable indication of a school's status on a desegregation/resegregation continuum.

A softer sign of resegregation is the labeling of school areas for use by discrete ethnic groups. Often students voluntarily converge in a location for social exchange before or after school or during lunch. We have observed, however, schools in which administrators have designated bus loading areas, lunch room areas, class seats, etc. on the basis of race. We propose that this deliberate separation of students decreases their opportunities to develop the appropriate skills and attitudes required for functioning in desegregated settings.

Counseling. Gatekeeping, or the making of judgmental evaluations that affect social mobility, is one of the functions of school counselors. When that group systematically directs Black youngsters into vocational curricular offerings or subtly reduces these students' academic and vocational aspirations, these counselors then engage in one of the most pernicious forms of institutional racism. We suggest that this practice is widespread, often involuntary and frequently invisible.

One study of the gatekeeping phenomenon reported that Black students with average-to-high academic performance were consistently dissuaded from attending college, while white students with high socio-economic status and mediocre to low academic performance were consistently encouraged to attend

post-secondary institutions. A frustrated urban counselor reported that she feels "empathy not only for the young people who I have programmed to failure, but for the counselor pressured by the realization of what could be done" if only urban counselors were provided with adequate time and resources. We suggest that the multiplicity of factors which contribute to discriminatory counseling practices in predominantly Black schools--i.e., level of student need, insufficient counselor/student ratio, instability and inexperience of teacher populations--severely limit Black youngsters' educational and vocational opportunities. Moreover, we predict that the bias of individual counselors toward Black students will be one of the most difficult extra-legal practices to isolate and remediate.

Special Education. The labeling of students (e.g., EMR) has emerged as another instructional and/or assignment pattern which can maintain segregated or reseggregated classrooms. Many researchers have concluded that a pupil's racial/ethnic background has a strong effect on his or her likelihood of being placed in a special education program.

- a. Minority children are involved in special education at a much higher rate than nonminority children (6.13% vs. 3.19%).
- b. As a district becomes poorer, smaller, less urban, and blacker, its students tend to participate in special education at higher ratios.
- c. Minority children are underrepresented in the special disabilities categories (those based on medical diagnosis) and overrepresented in EMR and other special education programs.
- d. For secondary school students, mental retardation is reported significantly more frequently for Blacks than for whites.

We infer from these data that the purported labeling of children for educational reasons, which may be a sound approach to the delivery of special services to students with special needs, is frequently co-opted and used to resegregate students along racial lines.

Co-Curricular Activities. Still another indicator of a resegregating school system is the presence of on-campus groups comprised entirely of one race. We have observed all Black or white student activity groups most frequently in schools exhibiting many other characteristics of extra-legally segregated schools. Additionally, we have observed this polarization when all activities are held after school and no transportation is provided for students. We believe that inter-racial communication around a cooperative task is one of the most powerful vehicles for successful desegregation and that uniracial teams, bands, clubs, etc. can, therefore, be classified as another extra-legal factor which promotes the resegregation process.

Conclusions

We have proposed an alternative model for the collection of school segregation data. Admittedly many of the variables are soft and don't readily lend themselves to multiple regression analysis although we haven't fully explored the possibilities in these matters. We are comfortable with that fact, however, since it has been our experience that the soft, subtle variables are the ones which ultimately result in the resegregation of a school.

We argue that the most effective data collection procedure should be implemented at the building level. A principal who must deal with disruptive

behavior in his school is hardly likely to use a multiple regression equation as his main source of information. Again we stress that so many of the popularized studies have been conducted at a level which makes them unusable to school personnel. To be sure, however, those studies have had a substantial impact on the legislative and bureaucratic mentality.

Ultimately nationally oriented policy research must be translated at the school building level. There appears to be a real emphasis gap between those who conduct desegregation research and those concerned with remediation of specific problems. At a recent conference on social science data in the desegregation process, Judge Doyle indicated that those data are simply not used by the courts for remediation decisions (Doyle, 1976). According to him, there is usually involved the criteria of what is reasonable and right. This disparity is further evidenced by a recent attempt of the RAND Corporation to induce the U. S. Civil Rights Commission to underwrite another Coleman-like study. At the first day's conference a national panel of desegregation experts voted an overwhelming "no" to the project. The prevailing feeling was that these kinds of data bases had created more harm than good.

We have proposed a model which dictates that researchers be involved with the people they are analyzing. By now it should be obvious that desegregation will not be accomplished in a computer. Although all legal mandates have been met, a school can be as segregated as it was originally. We propose a method which derives its validity from the clientele it purports to serve. We feel that researchers talk to researchers and that those who work with remedy can't listen, thus creating a debilitating gap between research and remedy.

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